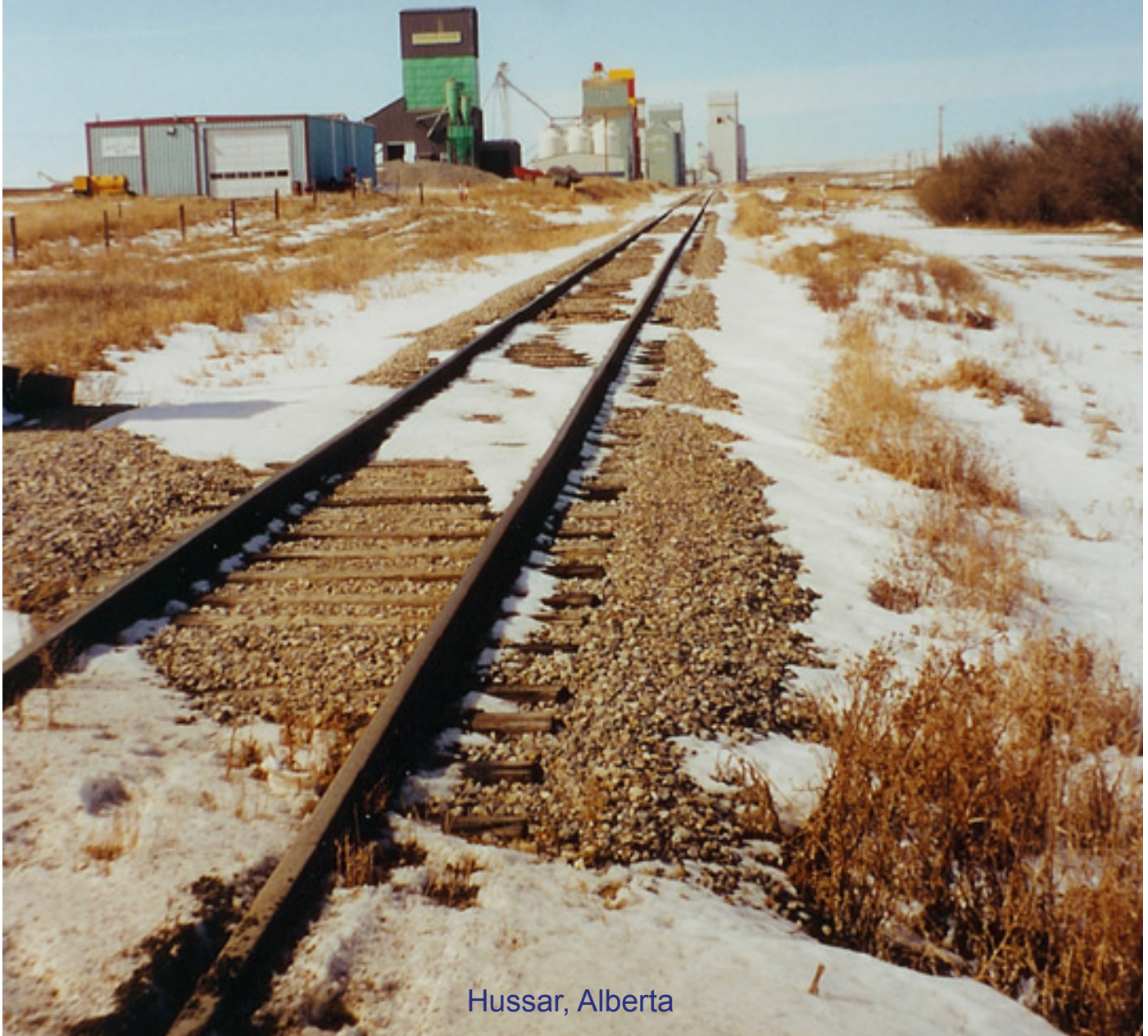


The New Rural Economy Project, Phase 2

MID-TERM REPORT TO THE SSHRC

June 2004



Hussar, Alberta



MID-TERM REVIEW REPORT

NRE² Project – Building Rural Capacity in the New Economy

Submitted to SSHRC

June 30, 2004

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MID-TERM REVIEW REPORT

Introduction

The purpose of this report is to provide the mid-term review committee with a document that will allow them to evaluate the progress to date of the NRE² project: *Building Rural Capacity in the New Economy*, to evaluate the quality and timeliness of the research, to assess the effective management of the project and to judge the extent to which the stated goals of dissemination and outreach activities are being met.

The report is organized into six sections: Objectives, Demonstration of Progress as per the Milestones Report, Management Structure, Roles and Responsibilities of Team Members and Partners, Schedule for Completion and Anticipated Results, and the Budget Review. The document will make reference to the Milestones Report submitted to the SSHRC in January 2003. It will also illustrate how the research relates to the five general objectives and five more specific objectives listed in Table 1 in Section 1.

The NRE² project is grounded in 17 years of prior research and discussion on rural issues and a 7-year history of research collaboration on the New Rural Economy. This has proven to be an advantage from the outset, since there was a history of collaborative research and large scale team management within the group and an existing relationship and involvement with the communities in question. Thus, although the first instalment of grant monies were received in March 2003, planned summer research projects which were poised to be executed were undertaken without undue delay. Thus the research projects as outlined in the Milestones Report could begin on schedule.

I. OBJECTIVES:

The table below restates the goals and objectives of the NRE² project. These are taken directly from the proposal submitted to the SSHRC in June 2002. Eighteen months into the project these goals and objectives remain current and continue to guide the focus of the research.

Table 1: NRE² Project Goals and Objectives

Five overall objectives listed, were to:

- Provide grounded, comparative, and comprehensive analysis of the processes of change relevant to building rural capacity under the new economy.
- Identify important economic, social, and political outcomes of these processes of change.
- Propose strategic and policy options with rural communities and government policy-makers in the light of these processes and outcomes.
- Build the research and education capacity of rural citizens and their groups.
- Establish a long-term research and education infrastructure to serve the above objectives.

Five more specific objectives flow from the general ones outlined above:

- To extend our understanding of key rural issues relating to the new economy and their implications for Canada. We have organized these issues under four themes: communications, environment, services and governance.
- To build the research and educational capacity in several rural-focused Centres and individuals that has emerged over the last few years.
- To maintain and develop our partnerships with the sites in the NRE “Rural Observatory” by extending the relationships with those already active, developing further collaboration, bringing site representatives together, and disseminating insights to all rural people.
- To develop appropriate indicators to analyze and monitor rural economies, social organization, and processes. This includes indicators that are sensitive to the structure and changes in local economies, trade, institutions (both formal and informal), social capital, social cohesion, health, environment, public safety, and household organization.
- To improve the quality, quantity, and access to, information relevant to rural Canada. This includes facilitating data access for research, policy, and local decision-making purposes, disseminating insights, and training rural people to use the information.

Concerns Raised by Adjudication Committee

The specific concern expressed by the Adjudication Committee was the inadequate publication record of the applicant and some co-applicants. Members of the adjudication committee judged that the records should include more peer-reviewed articles. This is a concern that is not easily remedied as the lead time for such publications is quite lengthy in the academic milieu. However, the situation has notably improved as evidenced by the increase in refereed articles attributed both to the PI and to other co-applicants on the grant. See Appendix A.

II. DEMONSTRATION OF PROGRESS AS PER THE MILESTONES REPORT:

The original project timetable from the Milestones Report has been replicated for each of the Theme Teams with a Status column added to document the current status of the Projects listed. As well there is the Central Team which complements and integrates the research of the entire project.

Services Theme Team (led by Greg Halseth at UNBC, Prince George, BC)

Project 1 – Services Profile update – This project included the development of a revised site profile for execution across the research network. Drafts of the revised document were circulated to members of the NRE network and it was revised at the Spring 2003 workshop in Ferintosh. Beginning in May 2003, the site profile document was executed across Canada. The remainder of the summer months was spent on data input and clean up with the rest of the NRE network. As usual substantial additions or clarifications were required as the data was examined for quality control purposes.

Project 2 – Innovative and Voluntary Sector Groups – This project included the development of a new survey instrument for collecting information on a range of voluntary and innovative service providers in rural communities. The sampling design involved four sites from across Canada, (Mackenzie, British Columbia; Wood River, Saskatchewan; Tweed, Ontario; and Springhill, Nova Scotia). The survey instrument was vetted by the NRE network and reviewed at the spring 2003 workshop in Ferintosh. All research teams submitted the completed survey instrument by August 2003.

Table 2: Services Team Timetable

Project	Activities	Begin	Due	Products*	Status
Profile	Identify sites and modify instruments	01-Jan-03	01-May-03	Instruments	Completed
Profile	Survey	01-May-03	01-Sep-03	Data	Collected
Profile	Identify sites and modify instruments	01-Jan-05	01-May-05	Instruments	Future Action
Profile	Survey	01-May-05	01-Sep-05	Data	Future Action
Profile	Report	01-Sep-05	01-Dec-05	Reports	Future Action
Innovation	Identify sites and modify instruments	01-Jan-03	01-Jun-03	Instruments	Completed
Innovation	Track associations	01-Jun-03	31-Aug-05	Data	On-going
Innovation	Report	01-Sep-06	28-Feb-06	Reports	Future Action
Theme	Annual Report	01-Aug-03	31-Aug-03	Report	Completed
Theme	Annual Report	01-Aug-04	31-Aug-04	Report	Future Action
Theme	Annual Report	01-Aug-05	31-Aug-05	Report	Future Action

*Note: In all Projects, under the Products column, Reports may take the form of working papers, publishable articles, theses, chapters and/or public documents

Since the completion of the initial collection of data, the Services Team prepared site giveback documents for all the sites where research was conducted. These have been distributed to site coordinators for use on return site visits.

Communications Theme Team (led by David Bruce at Mt. Allison University, Sackville, NB)

Project 1 – Inventory of Communications Tools and Resources: The purpose was to collect baseline data about available communications tools and resources. Initial inventory data were collected in 22 sites in the summer of 2003. The data was cleaned and analyzed. A report on each community was prepared and provided to each site researcher for distribution within each community. A companion PowerPoint presentation was also developed for each community and provided to each site researcher for use in presentations in the communities. The inventory data provided the basis on which to develop the framework and methodology for subsequent projects. The inventory will be repeated in summer 2005 for the purpose of assessing potential changes.

Two unplanned, undergraduate student projects have emerged from the inventory. The first is an assessment of the use of municipal/community websites in rural communities. We are looking at how the websites are used to project an identity of the community, and also at how the websites do or do not provide functional services for residents (e.g., paying bills on-line) and others (e.g., search for property to purchase). The second is a study of the role of Community Access Centres (CAP sites) in building capacity in rural communities to participate in the new rural economy. An analysis of the basic data on CAP sites is being supplemented with further data collection about the kinds of programs and activities being offered from the CAP sites.

Project 2 – Technology-mediated Learning Project: The purpose of this project is to facilitate and evaluate the use of communication technology as a learning tool by linking groups and individuals from our research sites. We are attempting to measure the extent to which capacity is being built to use the technology, to expand networks, and to acquire and use new ideas that can be applied to undertake developments in the context of the new rural economy. In September 2003, the project began facilitating on-line discussions among participants from 17 English-speaking sites. As of April 30, 2004 a total of 18 facilitated on-line discussions have been completed. In January 2004 the project began facilitating on-line discussions among participants from 5 French-speaking sites. As of April 30, 2004, a total of 3 facilitated on-line discussions have been completed. We have just completed an internal analysis of the content of the English-speaking chat sessions, as well as the user assessments and evaluations of their experiences. This information is being used to assess how well the project is going, and to inform decisions about next steps, including potential modification to the types of content being discussed, and the potential introduction and use of additional communication technologies, as planned in the original design.

Project No. 3 – Communication Strategies: The purpose of this project is to examine how community groups and municipalities currently communicate with one another and the community, and then, to facilitate the introduction of additional or new communication strategies and tools, and determine the impact/change/capacity to use them. The work plan and methodology for this project have been completed, and four sites, Benito, Seguin, Tweed and Twillingate will be locations for the project.

Project No. 4 – Traditional Media: The purpose of this project is to examine how traditional media (primarily community newspapers) have changed, especially in terms of changes brought about by the new economy. It will also examine how traditional media have portrayed the new rural economy (including the sources of information they use or depend upon). The workplan and methodology have

been completed, a literature review is near completion, and the design of the data collection instruments is underway. Six sites have been selected for case study analysis: Twillingate, St. Damase, Tweed, Seguin, Spalding, and Mackenzie.

Project No. 5 - Internet Use in Rural Communities: The purpose of this project is to explore in detail the characteristics of rural households which are Internet users, and the use they make of it. The project was originally planned to begin in January 2005, but we have moved the project start date earlier (February 2004) to reflect the availability of researchers and students. A workplan and methodology have been completed. A literature review and questionnaire design are underway. The survey will be conducted on-line in September, 2004.

Project No. 6 - Newspaper Editors Survey: The purpose of this project is to explore the role of community newspapers in rural communities, with an emphasis on the perspectives of the local editor. The project was planned for fall 2003 start-up but has been moved to fall 2004 for start-up, to reflect the availability of researchers and students.

Project No. 7 - Community Identity and Representation: The purpose of this project is to explore how communities communicate who/what they are to the outside world. The students' projects identified in the discussion of Project No. 1 will be a preliminary part of this larger project, planned for a fall 2004 start.

The Communication Theme Team also prepared site givebacks for site coordinators to use on return site visits to sites where summer research took place to share research findings with the communities where research was carried out.

Table 3: Communications Team Timetable

Project	Activities	Begin	Due	Products*	Status
Inventory	Identify sites and modify instruments	01-Jan-03	01-May-03	Instruments	Completed
Inventory	Collect data	01-May-03	01-Sept-03	Data	Gathered
Inventory	Prepare report	01-Sep-03	31-Dec-03	Reports	Completed
Inventory	Identify sites and modify instruments	01Jan-05	01-May-05	Reports	Future Action
Inventory	Collect data	01-May-05	01-Sep-05	Reports	Future Action
Inventory	Prepare report	01-Sep-05	31-Dec-05	Instruments	Future Action
Tech-learn	Design of research	01-Jan-03	01-May-03	Reports	Completed
Tech-learn	Identify groups and participants	01-May-03	15-Jun-03	Meetings	Completed
Tech-learn	Monitor learning	15-Jun-03	01-Sep-05	Reports	Future Action
Tech-learn	Prepare report	01-Sep-05	01-04-06	Reports	Future Action
Strategies	Develop framework	01-Jan-03	01-May-03	Instruments	Completed
Strategies	Identify groups and participants	01-Mar-04	15-May-04	Meetings	Future Action
Strategies	Identify and analyse current media projects	15-May-04	01-Sep-04	Reports	Future Action
Strategies	Identify and analyse new media projects	01-Sept-04	01-Sep-05	Reports	Future Action
Strategies	Prepare documents and reports	01-Sep-05	01-Apr-06	Reports	Future Action
Media	Develop framework	01-Jan-03	01-May-03	Instruments	Completed

Project	Activities	Begin	Due	Products*	Status
Media	Design and conduct case studies	01-May-03	01-Sep-04	Data	On-going
Media	Prepare documents and reports	01-Sep-04	01-Apr-05	Reports	Future Action
Internet	Develop framework	01-Jan-04	01-May-04	Instruments	Ongoing
Internet	Design and conduct survey	01-May-04	30-Sep-04	Data	Future Action
Internet	Prepare documents and reports	01-Oct-04	01-Apr-05	Reports	Future Action
Editors	Develop framework	01-Sep-04	01-Dec-04	Instruments	Future Action
Editors	Design and conduct survey	01-Dec-04	01-Jun-05	Data	Future Action
Editors	Prepare documents and reports	01-Jun-05	01-Jan-06	Reports	Future Action
Identity	Develop framework	01-Nov-04	01-Jan-05	Instruments	Future Action
Identity	Design and conduct survey	01-Jan-05	01-Mar-05	Data	Future Action
Identity	Prepare documents and reports	01-Mar-05	01-Apr-06	Reports	Future Action
Theme	Annual Report	01-Aug-03	01-Sep-03	Report	Completed
Theme	Annual Report	01-Aug-04	01-Sep-04	Report	Future Action
Theme	Annual Report	01-Mar-05	01-Apr-05	Report	Future Action

Governance Theme Team (led by Bruno Jean at Université du Québec à Rimouski, QC)

Since the question of capacity building in local governance is very critical for the revitalization of rural communities under the New Rural Economy, the research team decided to do an in-depth review of the literature on the subject of governance and related concepts. This will build solid foundations for relevant research in our Rural Observatory. With this in mind, three major scientific seminars were held (Rimouski in February 2003, Montréal in December 2003 and Rouyn-Noranda in February 2004). A fourth one is planned in Montréal on August 20-21, 2004. These seminars have resulted in several working papers. They are posted on the NRE website along with papers on Governance authored by our graduate students who are valued contributors to our work. The Governance team is also committed to jointly writing a major paper defining our theoretical concept of governance in rural communities. This will result in the publication of a paper in a scientific journal.

Project I - Case Studies: Two case studies in two NRE sites were undertaken in Cap-à-l'Aigle and Néguaac. In the first case, the interviews with the local governance representatives are completed and drafting of the report is very advanced. It will also lead to a Master's thesis in regional development at UQAR which will be presented in the summer of 2004. The study in Néguaac is still ongoing because it was initiated at a later date. According to the Milestones Report, four cases studies were planned. The research team on governance has delayed the launching of the two other case studies in order to build a theoretical and operational framework on rural governance which will allow for sufficient clarification of the methodology used in the next case studies.

Project 2 – Agencies: In this project, we will examine how new institutional arrangements (also involving government agencies) make it possible to strengthen the capacity for development in rural communities. In Canada, one thinks spontaneously of the experiment of Communities Futures Development Corporations (CFDCs). With the collaboration of the CFDC (SADC) network in Québec, and thesis work by a doctoral student we will identify the most significant insights emanating from local

development as represented in the CFDCs. Some scientific articles will result from it but there will also be a sharing of knowledge with these local development organizations.

Project 3 - Strategies: The new forms of rural governance can be understood through the study of local development strategies that several rural communities have initiated. These strategies generally start with exercises in "local strategic planning". Within the framework of a Master's thesis, a student is undertaking the analysis of an experiment in local development in a non-NRE site. In addition, a doctoral student is currently working on a thesis project, which will re-examine the question of the establishment of a methodological guide for new forms of local development. It includes the examination of development practices in leading and lagging NRE sites.

Project 4 - Rural/Urban relationship: Various teams share this project. The contribution of the Governance Team in the settlement of an agreement with the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) was to emphasize how rural governance must shift from an adaptive and reactive approach to a more anticipative and proactive approach.

Project 5 – Thematic research: From the beginning, several thematic studies connected to governance were planned. A thematic study on the conflicts of control over agricultural land (establishment of large pig farms) is in development. The student carrying out this research will base her Master's thesis on this subject. The management of local conflicts with new actors and based on new priorities, often related to environmental protection, calls for the creation of new forms of governance and new capacities for development. Another thematic study will examine the dynamics of local actors to see how the nascent New Rural Economy modifies governance, and the mechanisms of local social regulation.

Table 4: Governance Team Timetable

Project	Activities	Begin	Due	Products*	Status
Case studies	Develop framework	01-Jan-03	01-Apr-03	Reports	Completed
Case studies	Conduct field work	01-Apr-03	01-Apr-05	Reports	Future Action
Case studies	Prepare documents and reports	01-Apr-05	01-Apr-06	Reports	Future Action
Agencies	Develop framework	01-Jan-03	01-Apr-03	Reports	On-going
Agencies	Conduct field work	01-Apr-03	01-Apr-05	Reports	On-going
Agencies	Prepare documents and reports	01-Apr-05	01-Apr-06	Reports	Future Action
Strategies	Develop framework	01-Jan-03	01-Apr-03	Reports	On-going
Strategies	Conduct field work	01-Apr-03	01-Apr-05	Reports	On-going
Strategies	Prepare documents and reports	01-Apr-05	01-Apr-06	Reports	Future Action
Rural/Urban	Develop framework	01-Jan-03	01-Apr-03	Reports	On-going
Rural/Urban	Conduct field work	01-Apr-03	01-Apr-05	Reports	On-going
Rural/Urban	Prepare documents and reports	01-Apr-05	01-Apr-06	Reports	Future Action
Theme	Annual Report	01-Aug-03	01-Sep-03	Report	Completed
Theme	Annual Report	01-Aug-04	31-Aug-04	Report	Future Action
Theme	Annual Report	01-Aug-05	31-Aug-05	Report	Future Action

Environment Theme Team (led by Tom Beckley at University of New Brunswick, NB)

The environment theme is a new initiative of this project, whereas the other themes continue with basically the same structure and membership from our previous SSHRC collaboration. The theme was created because we recognized a gap in our previous work on social cohesion and community capacity with regard to the environment or natural resources and the role these play in shaping rural communities. As all these projects are thus new initiatives, we have less finished product to show at this point. We do have some work that is an elaboration of our previous incarnation as the capacity theme in our previous SSHRC project.

Project No. 1 - Inventory of natural capital: This project began in summer 2003 with a preliminary literature review. The objective of this project is to create a methodology for examining the natural capital stocks of local areas. The data from this exercise will be used as an input for both the community capacity work (as an input to that model), and for the climate change and resilience project. The project is currently administered at The Centre for Rural Studies and Enrichment at St. Peters College under the direction of Diane Martz. We have developed a definition of natural capital. The existing literature review is being expanded to include current initiatives by organizations and institutions to measure natural capital at various scales.

Project No. 2 – Rural/Urban Values Research: The objective of this project is to compare value and behavioural differences between rural and urban populations in Canada. The research is innovative in its attention to behaviour and the combination of attitudinal and behavioural measures. It is also innovative in that it includes data about where respondents were raised (socialized) in addition to their current residence. The literature review for this project is completed. A mail-out survey instrument has been developed and a national sample of urban and rural residence purchased. The ethics review was approved in early March and surveys were mailed in late May. We expect all returned surveys to arrive by August 2004, at which point data analysis will begin.

Project No. 3 – Governance of natural resources: Governance of natural resources – There are currently two students working on this project out of UNB, both at the Ph.D. level. Both are examining community forest management – one focusing on creating an evaluation framework for measuring the effectiveness of community management models for achieving their stated objectives. The other is focused on barriers to the creation of alternative tenure regimes. The latter project is occurring in two NRE sites (Seguin and Blissfield). The former includes a nationwide overview of all community forestry initiatives, but will also have a major case study component in four non-NRE sites in BC and Québec. Both students are at a similar stage in their research and programs. Background research and literature has been reviewed (proposal defences are scheduled for spring 2004 for both students).

Project No. 4 - Adaptation and transformation in resource dependent communities: Much of the material and information for this project is already in hand. It is now a matter of coordination and administration to launch the book proposal prepared and accepted by the research group.

Project No. 5 – Climate Change: This project is administered out of University of Guelph under the direction of Ellen Wall. It began in January 2004. The objectives of this project are to develop an adaptive capacity framework and profiling process that captures the “structural” resources available for community residents to rely on for climate risk management strategies. It will also describe current and past capabilities related to dealing with climate/weather impacts on resources with the intention of assessing capacity to adapt to future conditions. Data from the natural capital project and the early community capacity work of NRE will be integrated to examine how community capacity is actually manifested in a particular context (extreme weather/climate impacts). This project continues on schedule.

Table 5: Environment Team Timetable

Project	Activities	Begin	Due	Products*	Status
Natural Cap	Develop framework	01-Jan-03	01-Sep-03	Instruments	Completed
Natural Cap	Conduct survey	01-Sep-03	01-Sep-04	Data	On-going
Natural Cap	Prepare documents and reports	01-Sep-04	01-Oct-05	Reports	Future Action
Env. Values	Develop framework	01-Nov-03	01-Mar-04	Instruments	Completed
Env. Values	Conduct field work	01-Mar-04	01-Jun-04	Data	On-going
Env. Values	Prepare documents and reports	01-Jun-04	-1-Dec-04	Reports	Future Action
Property	Develop framework	01-May-03	01-Jun-03	Instruments	Completed
Property	Conduct field work	01-Jun-03	01-Sep-04	Data	On-going
Property	Prepare documents and reports	01-Sep-04	01-Oct-05	Reports	Future Action
Adaptation	Develop framework	01-Apr-03	01-Jun-03	Instruments	Completed
Adaptation	Conduct field work	01-Jun-03	01-Sep-04	Data	On-going
Adaptation	Prepare documents and reports	01-Sep-04	01-Mar-05	Reports	Future Action
Climate	Develop framework	01-Apr-04	01-May-04	Instruments	In Progress
Climate	Conduct field work	01-May-04	01-Sep-05	Data	On-going
Climate	Prepare documents and reports	01-Sep-05	01-Apr-05	Reports	Future Action
Theme	Annual Report	01-Aug-03	01-Sep-03	Report	Completed
Theme	Annual Report	01-Aug-04	01-Sep-04	Report	Future Action
Theme	Annual Report	01-Aug-05	01-Sep-05	Report	Future Action

Central Team (led by **Bill Reimer** at Concordia University, Montréal, QC)

These activities are designed to ensure integration across Themes – particularly with the overall focus of the project on capacity building. They also support national and international comparisons and collaborative co-ordination of research activities, and relations with field sites in the Rural Observatory.

Project No. 1 – Social Economy: This project was developed in collaboration with the ARUC en économie sociale at UQAM (ARUC-ÉS). The objective was to identify data and opportunities that might help us understand the role of the social economy in rural Canada. The first step was to determine whether social economy groups or activities could be identified and analyzed using our NRE information. Our plan now is to conduct such an analysis in a way that is compatible to the work of the ARUC-ÉS. Our initial work has been completed. We have identified the organizations in our NRE database relevant to the social economy, using three different definitions from the research literature. This forms a report to the ARUC-ÉS and we are waiting for a response from them before proceeding to the next stage.

Project No. 2 – Building Rural/Urban Relations: This project is designed to examine the interdependencies between rural and urban Canada. It emerged as a result of our previous work demonstrating how the capacity of rural communities was closely tied to their relationship with urban centres. It includes a review of the theoretical literature regarding these relationships in particular and inter-community relations in general, exploration of collaboration opportunities with urban-oriented organizations, and the production of materials for academic and policy audiences. This part of our work has advanced considerably, largely thanks to the initiative of our primary partner, CRRF. Some of the key accomplishments to date are the following.

- Completion of the first draft of a literature review on rural-urban relations.
- Presentation on rural-urban relations to the International Rural Network, Inverness, UK.
- Submission of a solicited chapter on rural-urban relations for a text-book on Urban Canada.

- Collaboration and initial drafts for a chapter on rural-urban relations for an academic text comparing Canada and Japan. This is being prepared with our Japanese colleagues on the (Canada-Japan) C-J Project.
- Establishment of a formal alliance between CRRF and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM). This alliance includes plans for a CURA proposal on rural-urban relations.

Project No 3 - Rural Canada Database: We have continued to develop and update various components of the NRE Rural Canada Database. It provides a key integrating focus for all of the research teams. This includes the following activities.

- Responding to requests from the NRE Theme teams.
- Integration of all CSD-level data from the 2001 census – creating a data base including data from 1986, 1991, 1996, and 2001.
- Preparation of a database composed of CSDs with constant boundaries from 1986 to 2001 in order to provide a basis for consistent longitudinal analysis.
- Integration of site-level profile data from 22 NRE Rural Observatory sites (cf. Services and Communications Themes activities). This adds to the profile-level data from 1998 and 2000. These databases include information regarding services, businesses, voluntary groups, communications, major events, and historical developments in the sites.
- Preparation of a draft of an Update on the Rural Canada Profile: a report identifying changes in key variables from 1986 to 2001.
- Collections and additions of municipal finances data (revenue and expenses) from all municipalities (rural and urban) in Canada – 2001. This is linked to our CSD-level database.
- Presentation of a paper on our sample frame to the USA Department of Agriculture – Economic Services Division, which was eventually published in their ‘Briefing’ notes series (<http://srdc.msstate.edu/measuring/series/>).

Project No. 4 – Integration (Capacity Analysis): The objective of this project is to ensure the integration of the various components of our project around the capacity framework. It will be done by continued examination of the theoretical literature, the development of indicators of capacity for academic and applied purposes, and the integration of these with the various activities of the research themes. Particular emphasis will be placed on social capital and social cohesion since they represent the core competencies of our team.

Specific indicators will be developed and evaluated for a number of purposes.

- First, we will develop indicators based on data collected as part of the Rural Observatory. It will be used to explore correlations to variables from the Canadian Census to determine opportunities for the examination of capacity.
- Second, we will develop and explore new indicators as a result of various theoretical models in order to examine the correlations between them and data from the NRE databases. This will allow us to determine both the external and internal validity of capacity measures.
- Third, we will construct indicators specifically designed for evaluating our NRE work. These will be used to determine in what ways our NRE research program might have contributed to the development of capacity in rural Canada.

To date, we have compiled a bibliography on capacity, prepared initial reports from reviews of the literature, examined various indicators, made a number of presentations, and submitted materials for publication. More specifically, the key accomplishments are the following.

- Bibliographical report on community capacity building.
- Bibliographical report on social capital.
- Bibliographical report on social cohesion.

- Analytical report regarding the relationship between NRE measures of social capital and those found in the Canadian Census. Our partners, The Rural Secretariat and Statistics Canada have gained funding to develop these and other indicators related to community characteristics.
- Presentations to academics and policy-makers: Inverness, UK; Rural Sociological Meetings, Montréal; Gatineau, QC; Prince-George, BC.
- Article on Social Capital submitted to *The Journal of Community Development*.
- First draft of chapters prepared for a book on social cohesion.

Project No. 5 – The Informal Economy: This is a project that emerged as a result of our previous work in the field sites. It became apparent that the informal economy plays an important role in rural Canada – particularly as it contributes to the functioning of the formal economy. As a result, we have developed a number of activities related to the analysis of the relationship between the informal and formal economies in rural locations. These activities include:

- A review of the literature regarding the informal economy in rural areas.
- Development of a framework for the analysis of the relationship between formal and informal economies in rural areas.
- Exploratory analysis of data in the NRE database regarding participation in the formal and informal economies, as well as the relationships between them.

Project No. 6 - Exploration of GIS: Much of the data related to rural areas is organized with a GIS component because of the strong influence of geography. For this reason, we wish to explore ways to make the integration of spatial data and representations more compatible with the analysis of this information. We also wish to explore how GIS technology and approaches can facilitate more public use of information relevant to planning and capacity-building.

To date we have been exploring ways in which this might be done. Some of the activities related to these objectives include the following.

- Scanning to computer of just under 2000 community maps as drawn by respondents in the NRE Household survey.
- Initial analysis of those maps
- Investigation of approaches to community-access to GIS technology
- Preliminary discussions with GIS centres regarding future collaboration possibilities

Project No. 7 – HIV/AIDS and Rural Canada: This project grew out of an internship opportunity at Concordia University. It blended well with our work on social capital and health. The following activities have been undertaken.

- A review of the literature on HIV/AIDS and Aboriginal People in rural Canada. This review is being prepared for a poster session at the Annual Health Conference of the CIHR, Sudbury, 2004.
- A review of the literature on the role of social capital in the spread of HIV/AIDS in Rural Communities. This review is being prepared for a poster session at the Annual Health Conference of the CIHR, Sudbury, 2004.

Table 6: Central Team Timetable

Project	Activities	Begin	Due	Products*	Status
Social Econ	Social economy Ph.D. Proposal	01-Jun-04	31-Aug-04	Reports	Ongoing
Social Econ	Social economy thesis	01-Sept-04	01-Jul-05	Thesis	Future Action
Rural/Urban	Review of literature	01-Mar-03	01-Dec-03	Reports	Completed
Rural/Urban	Chapter preparation	01-Aug-03	01-May-04	Book chapter	Completed
Rural/Urban	Research proposal	01-May-04	01-Sep-04	Research application - CURA	Ongoing
Database	Integrate 2001 data	01-Mar-03	01-Aug-03	Data	Completed
Database	Analyze and clean databases	01-Mar-03	01-Jan-06	Data	Ongoing
Database	Integrate Profile data	01-Apr-04	01-Jul-04	Data	Ongoing
Database	Integrate Health data	01-May-04	01-Sep-04	Data	Future Action
Database	Integrate Justice data	01-Sept-04	01-Feb-05	Data	Future Action
Integration	Social capital analysis	01-Jan-03	01-Aug-04	Presentations, article	Ongoing
Integration	Capacity analysis	01-Feb-03	01-Feb-05	Presentations	Ongoing
Integration	Revise & update capacity analysis	01-Jun-03	01-Feb-05	Article	Ongoing
Integration	NRE2	01-Feb-03	03-Mar-06	Presentations	Ongoing
Informal Econ	Develop frameworks	01-Oct-03	04-Jul-04	Reports	Completed
Informal Econ	Analyze existing data	01-Mar-04	01-Jul-04	Reports	Ongoing
Informal Econ	Prepare documents and reports	01-Jun-04	01-Oct-04	Article	Ongoing
GIS	Literature and software review	01-Oct-03	01-Jul-04	Reports	Ongoing
GIS	Report preparation	01-Jul-04	01-Oct-04	Reports	Future Action
GIS	Proposal preparation	01-Nov-04	01-Feb-05	Proposal	Future Action
HIV/AIDS	Literature review – Aboriginal	01-Sep-03	01-Jul-04	Papers	Ongoing
HIV/AIDS	Literature review – social capital	01-Sep-03	01-Jul-04	Papers	Ongoing
Project	Annual report	01-Feb-04	01-Mar-04	Report	Completed
Project	Annual report	01-Feb-05	01-Mar-05	Report	Future Action

Changes in the Milestone Schedule

There are no major changes in the Milestones schedule as described in the original document. However, some projects have taken longer than anticipated to get off the ground. Where this delay has occurred, some of the Theme Teams have adjusted by switching start dates with other projects in their schedules.

In certain areas, “spin off” projects have arisen because of student interest and availability of research avenues. For example, within the Communications theme group, an unplanned, undergraduate student project was completed, which builds on the Innovative and Voluntary Services project of the Services theme. A student conducted a case study of how volunteer groups in Springhill, NS (one of the sites in our Rural Observatory) are using Internet technologies for their work and for their communication with members, funders, and clients. A report was prepared and posted on the NRE² website.

Challenges

Researchers and field sites are widely dispersed across Canada and in some instances are in remote and inaccessible areas. This requires considerable effort to stay in touch with members of our research network. For example, our Steering Committee meetings are held fortnightly via a range of media. We have experimented with telephone conferencing, video-conferencing, internet video conferencing, and

internet chat rooms as ways to keep in touch. Although extra time is sometimes spent on logistics we have learned a great deal regarding the various strengths and weaknesses of various technologies – lessons that are passed on to rural groups and partners facing similar challenges.

III. MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE:

Dr. William Reimer, the Principal Investigator on the grant, manages the project, works in close collaboration with a 5-member Steering Committee of researchers from across Canada (Halseth, UNBC; Martz, USask; Jean, UQAR; Beckley, UNB; Bruce, Mt. Allison).

The PI carries a 9-credit teaching load at Concordia in addition to the supervision of a number of graduate students. In addition, he leads his own team of both undergraduate and graduate students working on the NRE² project. He is assisted in the day-to-day management of the project by a Project Administrator hired in April 2003 to deal with the administrative aspects of the project and a Liaison Officer who came on board in May 2003 to keep in close contact with the widely dispersed team of researchers and site people. The Liaison Officer also works closely with the Communications Officer and Controller taking care of the Knowledge Mobilization aspects of the research. Web Site management and upkeep of the databases fall within the purview of the Communications Officer who works with the Liaison Officer to design and maintain publicity material relating to the project. The management team is rounded out by a Team Leader and Office Manager who takes care of the day-to-day running of the Research Office and assists the PI in supervising the Concordia-based students working on the Project.

The Steering Committee works closely with the PI to deal with all policy decisions regarding the administration of the grant. Key decisions regarding budget, allocation of general responsibilities, quality control, and project directions are discussed and approved by this committee. Decisions relating to the Themes and projects are the responsibility of Theme Team leader and their team members. Four of the members of the Steering Committee are also Theme Team Leaders. This responsibility is supported by funding to each of the Theme Teams which provide financial and progress reports to the Central Administration on an annual basis.

As Vice-President of Research for the Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation (CRRF) the PI reports regularly to its Board. CRRF acts in an advisory capacity on the strategic decisions of the project and provides, through its annual conference and networks, a principal conduit for Knowledge Mobilization.

IV. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF TEAM MEMBERS:

Four research Centres (called Theme Teams), and the Central Team have been set up across Canada, each focused on a particular theme and led by an academic working in the area of rural research. These are:

- The **Services Theme Team:** Dr Greg Halseth, leader with Researcher, Laura Ryser
- The **Governance Theme Team:** Dr. Bruno Jean, leader, with Researchers: Peter Apedaile, Omer Chouinard, Augustin Épenda, Patrice LeBlanc, Steve Plante and Derek Wilkinson
- The **Communications Theme Team:** David Bruce, leader, with Researchers: Ivan Emke, Doug Ramsey, Derek Wilkinson and Anna Woodrow
- The **Environment Theme Team:** Dr. Tom Beckley, leader, with Researchers: Diane Martz, Ellen Wall, Solange Nadeau, John Parkins and Bonnie McFarlane
- The **Central Team**, which plays a key role in the integration of the research activities, is housed at Concordia University in Montréal, led by Dr. William Reimer, the Principal Investigator on the grant. He is also responsible for the overall administration of the project.

Most researchers are involved in one or more Theme Teams and serve as site coordinators for sites in our Rural Observatory (cf. Table 7). Dianne Looker and Norah Keating have been pursuing research interests elsewhere and have not been active participants in the second phase of the NRE² research project, although they continue to act in a consultative capacity. A wider network of 4 collaborators and 20 partners, numerous policy-makers, site leaders and community representatives support our work.

Table 7: List of Sites and Site Coordinators
(visit nre.concordia.ca/background_information.htm for more details)

PRE NRE ² DATA	NRE ² DATA	NRE ² SITES	COORDINATORS (CURRENT)
✓		Arctic Bay, NU	
✓		Armagh, QC	Bruno Jean
✓	✓	Blissfield, NB	Tom Beckley
✓	✓	Benito, MB	Doug Ramsey
✓	✓	Cap-à-l'aigle, QC	Bruno Jean
✓	✓	Carden, ON	Ellen Wall
✓	✓	Ferintosh, AB	Diane Martz
✓		Girouxville, AB	
✓	✓	Hussar, AB	Diane Martz
✓		Indian Brook, NS	
✓	✓	Lot 16, PE	David Bruce
✓	✓	Mackenzie, BC	Greg Halseth
✓	✓	Néguac, NB	Omer Chouinard
✓		North Plantagenet, ON	Ellen Wall
✓		Okanese 82, SK	Diane Martz
✓		Pic Moberg S., ON	Derek Wilkinson
✓	✓	Port Alice, BC	David Bruce
✓	✓	Rhineland, MB	Doug Ramsey
✓	✓	Seguin, ON	Derek Wilkinson
✓	✓	Spalding, SK	Diane Martz
✓	✓	Springhill, NS	David Bruce
✓	✓	St. Damase, QC	Anna Woodrow
✓		St. Roch de Mékinac, QC	Patrice Leblanc
✓	✓	Ste. Françoise, QC	Bruno Jean
✓	✓	Taschereau, QC	Patrice Leblanc
✓	✓	Tumbler Ridge, BC	Greg Halseth
✓	✓	Tweed, ON	Ellen Wall
✓	✓	Twillingate, NL	Ivan Emke
✓		Upper Liard, YK	
✓	✓	Usborne, ON	Ellen Wall
✓	✓	Winterton, NL	Ivan Emke
✓	✓	Wood River, SK	Diane Martz

Skills Acquired by Students (visit nre.concordia.ca/background_information.htm for more details)

From its inception the New Rural Economy project has promoted and facilitated learning experiences for students. The second phase of the NRE project (NRE²) continues in this tradition. NRE² research assistants acquire a wide variety of skills. The most important of these reflect the core values of the NRE² project. These include:

- theoretical development and critical analyses skills,
- research conceptualization and design,

- research planning and management,
- survey and data-gathering design capabilities,
- interviewing skills,
- in-depth literature review competence,
- data interpretation,
- fieldwork,
- report writing.
- professionalism and collegiality,
- enhancement of communication and organizational skills through involvement in conference planning, conference presentations, and interactions with community members and leaders, and
- specialized skills such as the use of ProCite (a bibliographical database program), Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint and Word. In addition some students have developed highly specialized skills in statistical analyses using hierarchical linear modeling (HLM), Geographical Information Systems (GIS) and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Most of the products associated with the NRE² project have involved the participation of students. Some of these products include recent chapters in the CJ (Canada/Japan) book (being written with our Japanese colleagues), a workbook on capacity, a project on “Traditional Media”, establishing clear boundaries of our community project maps, the development of indicators, and the production of flyers describing the most recent and significant developments coming out of the research.

Across Canada, NRE² researchers are now working with and training 23 Undergraduate students, 18 M.A. students, 7 Ph.D. students and 1 post-doctoral student. The students span a range of disciplines, including Geography, Sociology, Anthropology, Economics and Environmental Studies (see Appendix B).

Dissemination Activities

In addition to the traditional evidence of academic productivity: refereed articles, articles, books, presentations, reports and working papers (see Appendix A), we add outputs that are produced for a more general audience, such as flyers, brochures, media materials, interviews, workshops, conferences, an Internet site and teaching tools.

The first NRE² Spring workshop took place in Ferintosh, Alberta, one of our study sites. We gathered 40 people for 3 days to plan the Summer 2003 research activities. A second workshop was held in Spring 2004 in three venues in British Columbia: Prince George, Mackenzie (one of our sites) and Tumbler Ridge (another of our sites). A one-day CRRF Think Tank composed of policy-makers, researchers, NGO representatives, and rural people preceded it. Fifty participants attended the think tank and workshop.

In the Fall of 2002, CRRF held its 16th annual conference in Miramichi, NB. The conference theme, *Rural Matters* brought together NRE², Canadian and Japanese researchers, policy-makers, NGOs, students, and community representatives in a “rural university” format. This event was preceded by a one-day workshop for representatives from our field sites. There were 175 participants altogether.

In November 2003 the CRRF conference took place in Hull/Gatineau. It was a highly successful, innovative one-day event where we delivered the results of our research to policy-makers and site representatives in a plenary and roundtable format. Approximately 150 people participated at this event. As with the previous year, we held a one-day workshop with field site representatives before the conference, this time in St. Damase, QC. A NRE² field site workshop and CRRF conference is being planned for the Fall of 2004 – this year in Tweed, ON. As in the past, a strong NRE² research participation will be maintained.

Table 8: List of Spring Workshops and Meetings

October 2002	Miramichi Rural University, New Brunswick - CRRF
April/May 2003	NRE ² annual Spring Workshop, Ferintosh, Alberta
Nov. 2003	NRE ² annual meeting of site people and researchers, St. Damase, Québec
November 2003	Fall workshop/symposium, Gatineau, Hull, Québec, CRRF
April/May 2004	NRE ² annual Spring Workshop, Prince George, Mackenzie, Tumbler Ridge, BC
October 2004	Tweed, Ontario, CRRF
Spring 2005	Benito, Manitoba, NRE ² Spring Workshop
Fall 2005	Twillingate, Newfoundland, CRRF
Spring 2006	to be decided

V. SCHEDULE FOR COMPLETION AND ANTICIPATED RESULTS

Each Theme Team and the Central Team has provided an outline of the “Next Steps” to completion as per the Milestones Schedule above.

Services Theme Team – Next Steps

Project I - Services Profile Project

Another round of service profile updates will be completed in Summer 2005 in all study sites. A second task will be to advance the integration of service availability issues with the theoretical framework and model driving the project.

Project 2 - Innovative and Voluntary Services Project

A follow up will be completed with each of the surveyed organizations during the Summer 2004 period in order to identify critical changes during the intervening year. A complete profile work up on the surveyed organizations will be completed during the Summer of 2005 to round out our database on services, innovations, and roles for social capital and social cohesion through the four dimensions of capacity.

Communications Theme Team – Next Steps

Project 1 - Inventory of Communications Tools and Resources

We will revise the data collection instrument based on feedback from 2003. This will be used to collect data in 2005. These results will allow us to compare changes over time, and prepare project reports, community reports and articles for publication.

Project 2 - Technology-mediated Learning Project

We will continue to facilitate on-line chats and learning events, conduct a final participation evaluation, analyse the impacts on capacity building, and prepare a project report and articles for publication.

Project No. 3 - Communication Strategies

We will complete the literature review, visit case study sites in the Summer of 2004, analyze local communication patterns, implement new communication tools and strategies (beginning with Tweed in October 2004), assess the impacts on capacity building, and prepare a project report and articles for publication.

Project No. 4 - Traditional Media

We will complete key informant interviews in each case study site, complete the content analysis for each case study, and prepare a project report and articles for publication.

Project No. 5 - Internet Use in Rural Communities

We will finalize the content of our on-line survey, implement the participant invitation and promotion strategy, conduct the survey, clean and analyze the data, and prepare a project report and articles for publication.

Project No. 6 - Newspaper Editors Survey

We will develop the methodology and questionnaire, implement the survey, clean and analyse the results, and prepare a project report and articles for publication.

Project No. 7 - Community Identity and Representation

We will develop the methodology, complete a literature review, carry out the project, and prepare a project report and articles for publication.

Governance Theme Team - Next Steps**Project I - Case Studies**

We will complete the case studies for Cap-à-l'Aigle and Néguaac and start two more, prepare an academic paper on rural governance (for a book), and prepare community reports and articles for publication.

Project 2 – Agencies

We will finalize the study of the CFDCs (Community Futures Development Corporations) on how they build rural capacities, complete a Ph.D. dissertation on this topic, prepare a conference for the community (Réseau des Sociétés d'aide au développement des collectivités [SADC]), and prepare a project report and articles for publication.

Project 3 – Strategies for Local Development

We will complete the literature review, analyze local communication patterns of strategic planning, assess their impact on capacity building, and prepare a project report, community give-backs, and articles for publication.

Project 4 – Rural/Urban relationship

We will provide support on various research initiatives put in place by the Central Team.

Project No. 5 – Themes research

We will complete a research study of co-management of agriculture and rural land use, complete a M.A. dissertation, and prepare community give-backs, a project report, and articles for publication.

Environment Team – Next Steps**Project No. 1 - Inventory of natural capital**

We will refine the conceptual model of natural capital, select specific indicators for the general categories, collect the data, conduct the analysis, and prepare a project report and articles for publication.

Project No 2 – Rural/Urban Values Research

Data entry will be ongoing as the surveys are returned through June and July, 2004. Data analysis will occur in September, followed by a research report and articles for publication.

Project No. 3 – Governance of natural resources:

The fieldwork for both projects will commence in the summer of 2004 with an emphasis on pre-interviews for determining the best sites for case studies. A comprehensive “census” of community

forestry initiatives in Canada that is ongoing should be complete by the end of summer 2004. The results will be shown in a research report and publishable articles.

Project No. 4 - Adaptation and transformation in resource dependent communities:

The next steps are to solidify the editorial team and to create a book prospectus to take to potential publishers in the fall. We intend to have that work completed by October 2004.

Project No. 5 – Climate Change

We will refine the indicators, and then focus on Tweed as the “test case” while considering additional sites (potentially 6) to work on in the fall. Data collection will begin in Tweed and the analysis will follow. We will produce a paper for presentation at the CRRF/NRE conference.

Central Team – Next Steps

Project No. 1 – Social Economy

We will use the response from ARUC-ÉS as a basis for developing the next stage in our plan. Discussions are underway with a student at UQAR who would like to prepare a Ph.D. regarding the Social Economy. In addition to this dissertation, articles will be prepared for publication.

Project No. 2 – Building Rural/Urban Relations:

We will complete the chapter on rural-urban relations for the C-J book and develop a CURA project on rural-urban relations in collaboration with CRRF and the FCM. We will also prepare a presentation on rural-urban relations for the CRRF National Conference (October, 2004), and a publication on a framework for rural-urban relations. Work is currently underway on an academic paper regarding municipal finances in Canada (using the municipal finances database we prepared in the spring of 2004). It will be followed by a policy-oriented document on municipal finances in Canada.

Project No 3 - Rural Canada Database:

We will complete the Update on the Rural Canada Profile for distribution to policy-makers. This is a summary of major changes in rural Canada from 1986 to 2004. Work on the municipal finances database will continue and we will integrate Health and Justice information over the next few months. A document on sampling issues relating to the 2001 household survey will be prepared along with reports on the Profiles data collection. Preparation of documentation and materials in response to requests from the Theme Teams will continue throughout the balance of the project.

Project No. 4 – Integration (Capacity Analysis):

An academic article on the meaning and measurement of community capacity will be prepared along with a methodological note regarding the measurement of social capital using available census data. The publication of a book on social cohesion will be completed. A comparative analysis of capacity indicators found in the literature and in our databases (qualitative, quantitative, tangible, intangible) will be completed as well as an examination of indicators for measuring capacity-building related to the NRE project. This will be supplemented by the longitudinal analysis of CSD trajectories using our 1986 to 2001 census database. Analysis of this data will focus on key outcomes (population, employment, income, LICO (Low Income Cut Off), housing, family relations) as they relate to capacity issues. Several academic and public documents will be prepared.

Project No. 5 – The Informal Economy:

We will prepare at least 2 academic articles: one on the informal economy itself (cf. Resources and Environment Theme) and one on the relationship between the formal and informal economies.

Project No. 6 - Exploration of GIS:

We are working with the Rural Secretariat to prepare a web-GIS product allowing access to community-level information. Our role is the identification and development of indicators related to capacity, social capital, sustainability, economic stability, institutional capacity, and global connectedness. Also, a thesis and articles are being prepared using the community maps gathered as part of our 2001 household survey.

Project No. 7 – HIV/AIDS and Rural Canada:

This is an emergent project. Two papers are being prepared examining HIV/AIDS in rural Canada – one focusing on its general distribution and another with a particular focus on Aboriginal-peoples. These will be presented at the meetings of the Canadian Rural Health Research Society in October 2004 with publications to follow.

Anticipated Results

As indicated in the *Theme details* and *Next Steps* there are a large number of specific products and educational results that are and will be generated by this project. They cover the full range from traditional academic products to innovative activities directed for and with policy-makers and citizens. They are designed to increase the capacity of various target audiences to accurately assess their situation, organize appropriately for the changes taking place, and plan more effectively for the future. We anticipate by the end of the project to have the following results.

- We will have built a more extensive and appropriate data and information base for investigating and understanding rural Canada. It will include systematically prepared data of both a quantitative and qualitative form, with sufficient documentation to support future research. This will be found in our NRE Information Centre, Rural Observatory, and the Research Centres within our network.
- We will have developed well-tested conceptual frameworks for understanding some of the key characteristics of rural Canada, their relationships to national and global forces, and strategic options for dealing with the challenges they reflect. These frameworks will rest on high quality social science research addressing issues under all the themes and projects identified previously. The results will be found in our academic, policy, and public documents. Each format is adapted to a particular audience.
- We will have prepared and tested a number of tools and innovations for enabling researchers, policy-makers, and rural people to assess and improve their position in the new economy. These results will be found in the inventories, indexes, social initiatives, evaluations, and networks we are producing as part of our work.
- We will have increased the number of experienced researchers and learners who are well-equipped to interpret events, gather evidence, and take action on issues relating to rural Canada. The results will be reflected in the degrees, theses, reports, activities, and exchanges of the people in our network – both formal students and life-long learners.
- We will have inspired better-informed policy analysis and decisions at all levels of government. Results will be shown in the municipal, regional, provincial, and national decisions that reflect a long-term and broad point of view – with sensitivity to the special characteristics of rural people and places. They will also be shown by an increased capacity of voluntary groups to better serve the interests of their members and communities.

All projects are on target for completion as projected in the Milestones Report.

VI. BUDGET REVIEW

The initial budget request looks adequate for completion of the research over the period of the grant. The latest budget approved by Steering Committee in April 2004 is as follows:

Budget - NRE2							
22/06/2004							
				Proposed	Proposed	Proposed	
	Original	Expenses		Budget	Budget	Budget	Total
	Budget	to Date	Committed	Apr04-Mar05	Apr05-Mar06	Apr06-Nov06	
Themes							
Communications	\$350,000	\$122,026.02	\$18,174	\$90,200	\$95,100	\$0	\$325,500
Environment	\$350,000	\$125,448.00	\$14,752	\$90,200	\$95,100	\$0	\$325,500
Governance	\$350,000	\$125,200.00	\$15,000	\$90,200	\$95,100	\$0	\$325,500
Services	\$350,000	\$121,536.00	\$18,664	\$90,200	\$95,100	\$0	\$325,500
Integration	\$300,000	\$52,821.11	\$47,179	\$90,000	\$95,000	\$0	\$285,000
Communications	\$205,000	\$67,419	\$2,300	\$77,000	\$78,500	\$29,000	\$254,219
Networking Support	\$150,000	\$30,505	\$2,300	\$42,000	\$43,500	\$18,500	\$136,805
Workshops	\$88,000	\$35,927.48	\$0	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$0	\$85,927
Conferences	\$84,000	\$48,325	\$0	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$35,000	\$153,325
Sites	\$345,000	\$101,133	\$0	\$148,000	\$130,400	\$0	\$379,533
Projects	\$51,000	\$4,931	\$15,700	\$18,000	\$18,000	\$0	\$56,631
Steering Committee	\$0	\$4,351	\$0	\$5,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$15,351
Administration	\$375,000	\$84,548	\$5,000	\$97,000	\$100,500	\$42,700	\$329,748
Total	\$2,998,000	\$924,170	\$139,069	\$897,800	\$909,300	\$128,200	\$2,998,539
Surplus/Deficit	\$2,000						\$1,461

Institutional Support

Institutional support is in line with what has been originally promised with one major change with respect to the funding promised by the University of Plymouth. Our primary link with that University, our colleague and collaborator, Andrew Errington died suddenly in November 2003 and we do not anticipate forging new links with another researcher at that University. In general, the institutional support for our project has taken the form of provision of space, computer facilities support for students and for travel.

Website Address: <http://nre.concordia.ca>

The NRE² website, now in operation for over 5 1/2 years, has been redesigned to better serve researchers, policy-makers, rural citizens as well as students. It provides useful information to people in our field sites and others with an interest in rural issues. Thus, it includes a variety of materials and styles of presentation. It includes over 250 papers, reports, PowerPoint presentations, research instruments, and formal publications. The website is also used as a centre for research exchanges, with a site for discussion, chat groups, and a secure, password-protected site for access to data and working documents not available to the general public. A student network webpage has recently been added.

The site has received over 35,000 hits from various users to date. We will continue to develop the site and explore various options for improving its dissemination and capacity opportunities.

Other Relevant Information

This project has linkages with a large number of initiatives in research and educational capacity building. We estimate that NRE research has facilitated over \$150,000 of additional research and project monies relating to rural issues. We cite one example from the University of New Brunswick to illustrate - The Environment Centre initiated under the Project was recently granted \$368,000 for related work from the Tri-Council funded Sustainable Forest Management Network. The team for this related project has 50% overlap with the Environment theme for the NRE project (Beckley, Parkins and Nadeau). The Environment Theme out of UNB has one student on full scholarship through an FCAR. The estimated value of this contribution to the project to date is \$38,000.

In the area of educational capacity building we have evidence that many of our researchers are currently using NRE data, theories, models and resources in their classrooms as part of their teaching resources providing a framework for analyzing rural Canada.

It is also important to mention that many of our researchers, now regarded as experts in the field are frequently asked to sit on policy advisory committees or to present research findings to these committees, thus directly influencing current rural policy decisions. For example, Bill Reimer has met directly with the Hon. Andy Mitchell when he was Secretary of State for Rural Development, was an invited member of Mr. Mitchell's initial consultation group, and has been invited to speak at policy meetings of the Rural Secretariat of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and a special workshop of the Policy Research Initiative of the Privy Council. Greg Halseth and Bruno Jean sit as members of Mr. Mitchell's Advisory Committee for Rural Matters. In addition, many of our researchers provide advice to policy-makers at municipal, provincial, and federal levels through other committees, presentations, and publications (cf. Appendix A). Although not traditionally recognized as academic activities, they contribute significantly to the impact of our research and knowledge mobilization in general. They also create additional demands on our time that are not always acknowledged in our institutional settings.

We feel that our unique relationship with our sites and site people should be acknowledged, particularly since this sort of relationship is not traditionally a component of social science research. In our case, however, it is particularly important. Our researchers work with our sites in a variety of ways. Most of them have developed working relationships and projects with members of our research network which extend beyond the core of the NRE² research itself. For example, David Bruce, Team leader for the Communications Team has provided some developmental assistance to Lot 16, PEI as they planned and implemented a new monthly community newsletter to enhance communications in their community. He has also facilitated some initial community planning for a potential new museum in Springhill, NS.

The development of these relationships requires considerable time and energy investment. It also requires extra flexibility to accommodate the unique characteristics of each site and additional research effort to monitor all of the exchanges involved. When deciding between the traditional demands of 'objectivity' for research and the value of a more long term engagement with our field sites, we decided in favour of the latter for both methodological and ethical reasons. The value of this decision has been demonstrated by the richness of the insights we have gained and the contributions we have made to the field sites. In working with the sites over an extended period of approximately seven years we have learned much more than we would have over a shorter research project. Our annual field site workshops provide opportunities for site people to exchange information, share expertise, draw on each others' strengths for problem solving, and generate ideas for moving ahead on particular projects. We have also facilitated this collaboration through "chat rooms", an exchange with Japan, and other networking opportunities both nationally and internationally. All these activities have a major impact on our time and resources.



MID-TERM REPORT TO THE SSHRC

APPENDICES

Appendix A: NRE² MATERIALS

BOOKS

- Bruce, D. and G. Lister (eds). 2003. *Opportunities and Actions in the New Rural Economy*. Sackville, NB: Rural and Small Town Programme.
- Halseth, G. and R. Halseth. (eds). 2004. *Building for Success: Explorations of Rural Community and Rural Development*. Brandon University, Brandon, MB: Rural Development Institute & Canadian Rural Revitalization Foundation.
- Ramsey, D. and C. Bryant (eds). 2004. *The Structure and Dynamics of Rural Territories: Geographic Perspectives*. Brandon, MB: Brandon University (Rural Development Institute).

BOOK CHAPTERS—REFEREED

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Appendix B: Skills Acquired by Students

Skill	Undergraduates	M.A. Students	Ph.D. Students
Research Skills			
Survey and Research Design	✓	✓	✓
In-dept Lit. Reviews	✓	✓	✓
Fieldwork	✓	✓	✓
Writing Skills			
Report Writing	✓	✓	✓
Critical Analysis	✓	✓	✓
Communication			
Conference Planning	✓	✓	
Interviewing	✓	✓	✓
Presentations	✓	✓	✓
Specialized Skills			
SPSS	✓	✓	✓
HLM			✓
GIS	✓	✓	
Excel	✓	✓	
PowerPoint		✓	✓
Word	✓	✓	

List of Students and Universities:

Student	University	Level
Tchabagnan Ayeva	Université du Québec à Rimouski (UQAR)	Ph.D.
Katy Beaton	Mt. Allison University	B.A.
Cathy Bessette	UQAR	M.A.
Luc Bisson	UQAR	Ph.D.
Angela Briscoe	Concordia University	M.A.
Ingrid Brueckner	University of Saskatchewan	M.A.
Mike Burns	Concordia University	B.A.
Onkar Buttar	Univ. of Northern British Columbia (UNBC)	B.A.
Noah Campbell	Concordia University	B.A.
Judy-Ann Connely	UQAT	M.A.
David Connell	Guelph University	Ph.D., (post doc.)
Evan Dickinson	Mt. Allison University	B.A.

Student	University	Level
Jamie Dressler	Concordia University	B.A.
Shiloh Duekee	UNBC	B.A.
Augustin Ependa	UQAR	Ph.D.
Anelie Santos Espirito	Concordia University	B.A.
Nancy Gagné	UQAR	M.A.
Jessica Gallant	Concordia University	M.A.
Kelly Geisbrecht	UNBC	M.A.
Leigh Golden	Guelph	Ph.D.
Lori Gould	Brandon University	M.A.
Moses Gtiepoh	Concordia University	Ph.D.
Corinne Harris	Concordia University	B.A.
Emily Huddard	University of New Brunswick (UNB)	B.ScF.
Hana Janouskova	Concordia University	M.A.
Asaf Kashid	UNB	Ph.D.
Mike Kennedy	UNB	B.ScF.
Rebeka Kennedy	University of Saskatchewan	M.A..
Nora King	UNBC	B.A.
Isabelle Lantagne	Concordia University	M.A.
Heather Legge	Memorial University	B.A.
Rebecca Lipton	Concordia University	M.A.
Lindsay Lyghtle	Mt. Allison	B.A.
Tara Lyons	Concordia University	M.A.
Matthew MacInnis	Mt. Allison	B.A.
Andrew MacKinnon	Mt. Allison	B.Comm
Don Manson	UNBC	M.A.
Katia Marzall	Guelph	Ph.D.
Sharmallene Mendis	University of Saskatchewan	M.A.
Sophie Anne Morin	UQAR	M.A.
Melanie Musie	Laurentian University	B.A.
Funmi Omole	Concordia University	M.A.
Cecelia Pares	Concordia University	M.A.
Valerie Penton	Memorial University	B.A.
Virginia Pow	UNBC	B.A.
Seynabou Sissoko	Moncton University	M.A.
Carla Stevens	Mt. Allison	B.Sc.
Sara Teitelbaum	UNB	Ph.D.
Shannon Tuck	Laurentian University	B.A.
Karmen Vanderzwan	University of Saskatchewan	B.A.
Brigid Ward	University of Saskatchewan	B.A.
Kristi Whitfield	Laurentian University	M.A.